(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The investigating authorities have arrested the proprietor of the travel agency involved. Three employees of the Regional Passport Office, Mumbai, three police personnel, two postal employees and fifteen other people have also been arrested.

Sale of Fake Indian Currency by Pak Embassy Official

793. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item titled "Nepal Police trap Pak embassy official selling fake Indian currency" which appeared in the Indian Express dated the 4th January, 2000; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken on the above matter by Government, so far?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Government are aware of media reports regarding the detention of a Pakistani Embassy official by the Nepal Police in Kathmandu following the seizure of counterfeit Indian currency worth Rs. 50,000/- in 500-rupee denomination from his possession. Assam Saboor, UDC in the Pakistani Embassy in Kathmandu, was caught red-handed on January 2, 2000, while passing off the counterfeit Indian currency notes to an under-cover officer of Nepal Police. On January 5,2000, he was asked by the Government of Nepal to leave the country within 72 hours on account of "his involvement in an activity incompatible with his status".

The incident gives further credence to the reports received by the Government of India indicating evidence of ISI involvement in the circulation of fake Indian currency in Nepal. The matter has been taken up with the Government of Nepal. While appreciating the deterrent action taken by the Nepal authorities against the Pakistani Embassy official, the Government of India have also conveyed their concern and sought the cooperation of the Government of Nepal on this issue. On their part, the Government

of Nepal have reiterated that their territory would not be allowed to be used for activities inimical to India's interest and have assured to extend full copperation to the Government of India in this regard.

Initiatives to Cut Links with Pakistan

794. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA:
SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to stop all trade, transport and communications with the Pakistan for its terrorist and hijacking activities; and

(b) if so, by when Government would take initiative in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Harassment of Female Workers in Council General's Office in Mumbai

795. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the female workers are harassed in the Counsel General's Office in Mumbai;

(b) whether any complaint has been received; and

(c) what remedial meausres are proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.